

# Citizen Centric Report - Fiscal Year 2021

## Office of the Attorney General



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### MISSION

The Office of the Attorney General provides legal counsel and representation to Commonwealth government and its agencies on many issues vital to the people's interest. These issues include the protection of children from abuse and neglect, preservation of the environment, protecting the Commonwealth's financial assets, the protection of consumers, and public safety.

### WHO WE ARE

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) is constitutionally created pursuant to the NMI Constitution, ART. 11I, § 11, as an independent agency within the Executive Branch. The Office of the Attorney General is headed by an Attorney General elected to a four-year term. The Attorney General is the Chief Legal Officer of the Commonwealth Government and is responsible for:

- Providing legal advice to the Governor and Executive Departments including public corporations and autonomous agencies;
- Representing the Commonwealth in all legal matters and;
  - Prosecuting violations of commonwealth law.

### CONTACT US:

CNMI Office of the Attorney General  
Caller Box 10007  
Saipan, MP 96950

### WEBSITE:

[www.cnmioag.org](http://www.cnmioag.org)

Civil Division: 237-7500  
Criminal Division: 237-7600  
Investigative Division: 237-7630  
Victim Witness Advocacy Unit: 237-7602

## **OUR PROGRESS**

### ***ACCOMPLISHMENTS:***

- ❖ Prevailed in: Litigation cases (6) and Administrative matters (5)
- ❖ Brought administrative actions against Imperial Pacific International for failure to abide by the Casino License Agreement, pay its annual licensing fee and casino regulatory fee, and comply with orders of the Commonwealth Casino Commission
- ❖ Prevailed on a mandamus regarding discovery (Rudolph, 2020 MP 22)
- ❖ Successfully transferred an offender from juvenile court to adult court and was charged with sexual assault in the first degree
- ❖ Passage of the Office of the Attorney General's legislative initiative Public Law 22-06 to protect the people of the Commonwealth from per and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination of our groundwater supply
- ❖ Joined numerous states, territories, counties, and cities from across the county in a landmark lawsuit against Johnson & Johnson and their U.S. based Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies over the companies' misconduct in the sale of opioids. The Commonwealth will receive settlement funds over a multi-year period beginning 2022 for opioid abatement-related programs and projects
- ❖ Settled with McKinsey & Company Inc., United States, related to claims against McKinsey in the Opioid Multi-State Litigation and received settlement amount for opioid abatement-related programs and projects
- ❖ Settled with American Honda Motor Company related to defective airbag and received settlement amount
- ❖ Succeeded in a mandamus against a Superior Court's order requiring discovery for preliminary hearings in criminal cases

### ***ACTIVITIES:***

<b>DIVISION/UNIT</b>	<b>FY2021</b>
<b>CIVIL DIVISION</b>	
Agencies Served	70
Procurement Contract Review	1224
Personnel Contract Review	1545
Review of Legislation for the Governor	36
Review for Legislative Comments	61
Legal Services Request	545
Litigation	44
Appeals	2
<b>CRIMINAL DIVISION</b>	
Criminal - Felony	142
Criminal - Misdemeanor	267
Juvenile	12
Traffic	3206
<b>OFFICE OF THE CONSUMER COUNSEL</b>	
Complaints Received	7
Complaints Resolved	4
<b>INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION</b>	
Penal Summons - Served	64
Witness Summons - Served	132
Bench Warrants - Served	14
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION</b>	
Apostilles	165
Certifications	59
Notary Public - New Applicants	34
<b>CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT UNIT</b>	
Active Cases	339
Closed Cases	8
<b>VICTIM WITNESS ADVOCACY UNIT</b>	
Victims Served - Criminal	496
Victims Served - Civil	196

# OUR FINANCES

## *BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES:*

BUDGET	FY2021
<b>GENERAL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$2,164,718.00</b>
Personnel	\$2,085,076.00
Operations	\$79,642.00
<b>FEDERAL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$259,958.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$2,424,676.00</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION COLLECTIONS</b>	
Apostilles	\$8,250.00
Certifications	\$2,950.00
Notary Public	\$2,350.00
Commonwealth Register	\$320.00
<b>TOTAL COLLECTIONS</b>	<b>\$13,870.00</b>
<b>CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTIONS</b>	
Collected and Distributed	\$337,595.39
Tax Rebate Offset	\$29,410.83
Child Tax Offset	\$6,816.69
Economic Impact Payment (Stimulus) Offset	\$7,409.53
Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Offset	\$42,718.50
<b>TOTAL COLLECTIONS</b>	<b>\$423,950.94</b>

### **REPORT PUBLIC CORRUPTION**

Public Corruption is a breach of trust by local officials or government employees, who undermine our Commonwealth's overall safety, the public trust, and confidence in our local government. If anyone has any information about wrongdoings by a public official or government employee, please submit a tip online at [www.cnmioag.org](http://www.cnmioag.org) or contact our Investigative Division at 237-7630



### Consumer Complaints

The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) promotes and protects the interests of the CNMI consumers while ensuring a competent and fair marketplace.

Consumer Complaint forms may be obtained at [www.cnmioag.org](http://www.cnmioag.org) under the Consumer Protection section or in person at the Civil Division in Capitol Hill, or via email by sending a request to [consumer\\_counsel@cnmioag.org](mailto:consumer_counsel@cnmioag.org)

## WHAT'S NEXT

### *HIGHLIGHTS:*

- ❖ Provided legal guidance to the Commonwealth's response to the global COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of emergency service.
- ❖ Resolved seventeen (17) contested litigation and administrative matters.
- ❖ Guilty jury verdict in child abuse trial CR 20-0119-A CNMI vs. Stacy Laniyo.
- ❖ Improved coordination with CHCC psychiatric support by coordinating with the Public Defender's Office and psychiatrists on treatment of offenders with substantial mental health issues.
- ❖ Filed an Amicus Brief in the U.S. Supreme Court supporting Guam in which the Justices voted 9-0 in favor of Guam that it could seek contribution from the U.S. Federal Government for cleanup of the Ordot dump.
- ❖ The Office's case management software was upgraded to the latest version which improved database functionality and enhanced data quality.

### *KEY INITIATIVES FOR 2022:*

- ❖ Continue to provide legal advice and guidance to the Executive Branch, Departments and Agencies and to represent the Commonwealth in the trial court, and on matters currently on appeal.
- ❖ Focus on illegal business practices that hurt our consumers and other business; implement consumer awareness programs, and investigate consumer complaints.
- ❖ Continue to promote and ensure an open and transparent government.
- ❖ Continue to work on new procurement regulations for the government and provide training to agencies.
- ❖ Continue to explore solutions to mental health issues in the criminal justice system.
- ❖ Continue to collaborate with other jurisdictions to expand resource activities to combat illegal drug and criminal activity in the CNMI.

### **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU**

Do you like this report? Would you like to see other information? Please let us know by contacting Ashley Babauta at 237-7500 or email [ashley\\_babauta@cnmioag.org](mailto:ashley_babauta@cnmioag.org)